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THE federal trainer

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE FEDERAL TRAINING COMMUNITY

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USDA RUNS COURSE FOR EMPLOYEE-ASSISTANCE PROGRAM COORDINATORS

When the government turned its alcohol and drug abuse program into the broader employee counseling services program, many people suddenly found themselves running programs for which they had received little training. Nevertheless, as employee-assistance program coordinators, they were and are expected to help employees with a wide range of behavioral, emotional, and medical problems.

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To fill the vacuum, the Department of Agriculture and OPM's Training Consulting Division worked together to develop a three-day course that trains coordinators in early intervention and referral techniques. Although it was designed with Agriculture's new coordinators in mind, it is relevant to both new and experienced coordinators in any agency.

The participants in the course's test run were national employee-assistance program coordinators. Because they felt that the course meets the needs of coordinators in a variety of settings, Agriculture is planning to offer it to its coordinators in field offices throughout the country.

The course materials include an instructor's guide that has lesson plans and notes, a participant's handbook, and a coodinator's handbook. The coordinator's handbook is the first of its kind in the field. It is a complete reference guide to doing the job, and because it can be used independently of the training, it can be ordered separately from the course materials.

The only way right now to get copies of the course materials is to ride OPM's printing requisition. To do so, tell your agency's printing officer how many copies you want and that information about ordering is in the October "OPM Monthly Rider Bulletin" under "Employee-Assistance Program Coordinator Workshop." (It may be possible, later, to buy copies from the Government Printing Office.)

For more information, call Betty Dennis, a member of OPM's Training Consulting Division, on FTS 632-5661.

PM 1.19/3:

WHAT'S AVAILABLE?

* FPM Letter 410-26 ptescribes policies for determining whether Federal employees will be trained in government or non-government facilities. Dated September 3, 1980, and entitled "Determining the Source of Training," the letter explains the impact of OMB Circular No. A-76 on agency training programs. Copies are available from OPM's Training Information Clearinghouse. (See "Editor's Note" for address.)

* The Government Printing Office is selling OPM's three-hour training module on sexual harassment. Called "Workshop on Sexual Harassment," it was developed by OPM employee Alison Shumate.

  The module, which can be incorporated into a variety of supervisory, managerial, and personnel courses, consists of participants' materials and a trainer's manual. They explain the government's position on sexual harassment, how such harassment affects the government's productivity and image, and the action that can be taken to correct abuses.

  To order, write to the Government Printing Office: Superintendent of Documents, GPO, Washington, DC 20402. Include the stock numbers with your order (006-000-01183-7 for the trainer's manual and 006-000-01184-5 for the participants' materials). At the time this article was written, GPO had not yet decided on the prices.

* As part of the drive to improve relations between the public and the government, OPM has developed a course called "Courtesy in Government." Meant to be a two-day workshop, the course stresses theory on the first day and practice on the second. The instructor's manual and some of the materials for participants can be bought from NTIS. They cost $6.00 in paper and $3.50 in microfiche. The document number is PB-80-194947. Please see the last paragraph of this article for instructions on placing orders.

* An upward mobility program won't work unless the initial planning is carefully done. So says a recent OPM publication by Janice Smith called "Upward Mobility: Considerations for Program Planning and Development."

The program should be tailored to the structure of the particular agency it is meant to serve. Specifically, it should be constructed around units in the agency about which the following statements are true: people have moved up in the past, more people are needed now, it has positions that can be adapted to the skills of a para-professional or technician.

The 46-page publication explains how such units can be identified and gives tips on counseling participants, on administering the program, and on evaluating the results.

Copies are available from NTIS (please see the end of this article for information on placing orders). It costs $6.00 in paper and $3.50 in microfiche; the document number is PB-80-178262.

* Under the Civil Service Reform Act, all Federal-sector labor contracts must include procedures for grieving complaints. OPM's Labor Relations Training Center has written a booklet that explains how those procedures are negotiated. Called "Federal Negotiated Grievance Procedures," it is 22 pages of programmed instruction. Although it was designed to be read as background for a course, it is useful to anyone who is interested in the subject.

OPM is re-printing the publication at the end of the year. The only way to get copies for yourself is to ride OPM's printing requisition; that is, to add your order to ours. To do so, tell your agency's printing officer that information about ordering copies is in the October "OPM Monthly Rider Bulletin" and how many copies you want. The officer will handle the rest. To be accepted, the order must reach the Government Printing Office by December 1. (Unfortunately, non-federal readers cannot ride the requisition, and there is no other way to get copies of the booklet.)

To order publications from the National Technical Information Service, write to: U.S. Department of Commerce, NTIS, Port Royal Road, Springfield, Virginia 22161. The commercial number is (703) 487-4650; the FTS, 737-4650.

READEX FICHE

Trainer's Desk Reference

COMPUTER-BASED INSTRUCTION

Susan Miccio

You've seen articles about Computer-Based Instruction (CBI) in the journals for some time now. Maybe you checked it out once, or, maybe you never checked it out. Maybe you started to but decided that CBI was too futuristic. In any event, you haven't given any serious thought to CBI for your agency for a while. Does any of this apply to you? If so, read on...

Did you know...

--that at least nine civilian agencies, not to mention the numerous military organizations, have implemented or are in the process of implementing some type of CBI and still others are studying CBI seriously?

--that the types of CBI being studied or implemented include such varied subject areas as ADP, technical program administration, and aircraft pilot certification testing?

--that a training cost model developed by OPM will be adapted to reflect CBI costs?

--that an active, interagency group of headquarters-level representatives meets monthly to discuss subjects such as CBI state-of-the-art and resource sharing?

Why is this effort (of which these are only a few examples) going into CBI? Trainers in most civilian agencies are being urged to: increase productivity, reduce training time, cut costs, improve retention, ensure consistency of training and testing, and allocate resources more efficiently. That's why they're looking seriously at one form or another of CBI. Remember, CBI has not been standing still. Thanks to technological advances in the computer industry (coupled with decreasing costs) and the contributions of private and public sector trainers, the state-of-the-art has advanced steadily. All the more reason to look into CBI now.

CBI is a broad term which encompasses Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI) and Computer-Managed Instruction (CMI). CAI can: deliver training at any level, provide drill and practice, simulate job situations, keep track of student progress, automatically direct students to review, advance proficient students, and generate progress reports. CMI can: assist in test design and validation (as well as scoring), prescribe remediation on an individual basis, perform administrative tasks such as scheduling and assignments, and track training expenditures. Would any of these features meet a need in your agency?

If you think so, here are some actions you can take.

Get our information package by calling OPM's Instructional Technology Assistance Branch on FTS 632-7623. The package includes a discussion of the benefits of CBI, an explanation of the services available from OPM and the private-sector experts under contract to OPM, descriptions of what major agencies are doing in the field, articles from professional journals, and a bibliography.

If you are in a headquarters office you can also take the next two steps. (If you are in a field office, you can't, but you can use the expertise you gain from reading the package to persuade people in your headquarters to do so.)

First, attend a meeeting of the Interagency Group for Computer-Based Training. The Group enables its members to keep abreast of the state-of-the-art and track progress of the other agencies.

Secondly, if you are ready to seriously consider implementing CBI, call the Instructional Technology Assistance Branch to arrange for a preliminary consultation (FTS 632-7623).

DMA TRAINS MANAGERS IN LABOR RELATIONS

Throughout the complicated, year-long process of becoming unionized, the Hydrographic/Topographic Center of the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) worked closely with OPM in preparing its managers and supervisors to handle their new responsibilities.

As each stage of the unionizing was completed, DMA supervisors and managers were trained so they would be prepared for the next stage. They began with a one-day course on the union organizing effort. After the union won the election, the supervisors and managers received another one-day course. It covered such topics as unfair labor practices, the supervisor's role as a representative of management, the supervisor's relationship with union officials, and the implications for supervisors and managers of an exclusive union.

Next in the unionizing process was negotiating with the union over the terms of the contract. Those managers and supervisors who had been picked to represent management received a four-day course on bargaining.

Finally, after the contract had been signed, all supervisors and managers received a one-day course on the contract and on the principles of administering an agreement.

Each of these courses was planned and given jointly by trainers from DMA and from OPM's Labor Relations Training Center. DMA trainers concentrated on the specific needs of their agency; OPM trainers focused on the Civil Service Reform Act and labor-management relations. The combination was a success; not only was DMA management prepared to deal with its changing labor relations responsibilities, DMA trainers, in the three-week course they give to new supervisors, use much of the material they received from OPM.

For more information on getting labor relations courses that are tailored to the needs of your agency, call the Labor Relations Training Center on FTS 632-4410.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Federal Trainer publishes news about training activities in the Office of Personnel Management and in other agencies. If you would like to share information with other government training specialists, call or write the editor, Barbara Garland. The phone number is FTS 653-6132, area code 202. The address is: OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT/TRAINING INFORMATION BRANCH WED/ ATTN THE FEDERAL TRAINER/P O BOX 7230/WASHINGTON DC 20044. To make it easier for the Post Office to sort the mail, please type the address as shown above--in capital letters and without punctuation marks.

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